

Marq C. "Micah" Simpson  
Gateway Community College  
Central Connecticut State University  
HB6659 Opposed

02/15/23

Good afternoon, Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and members of the Committee, my name is Micah Simpson, and I am a Sociology Major at Central Connecticut State University. I live in Hartford, Connecticut, and I am here today to ask you to fund higher education. Governor Lamont's budget makes cuts to an already underfunded system, and I am asking you to restore the funding and expand it.

I attended Gateway Community College at a time when I was not sure what whether I wanted to go to college. Fortunately, I had such a great experience there that it made me decide to continue my education and pursue graduate school. I met many faculty members who have been mentors to me, providing me with essential guidance that allowed me to achieve greater understanding of my interests.

Much of the quality education I have received has come from the unpaid labor of my teachers. The professor that opened my eyes to the social science of sociology and was essential to my pursuit of further education was an adjunct at the time. Being an adjunct, he had to leave our state to find full-time work; this shouldn't have to be the case. Even then, he continued to provide me with invaluable mentorship and guidance which, had he been full-time, the people of Connecticut would still have access to.

I would like for others to have access to this quality education. However, the state has not shown the same enthusiasm for the services provided by this system with the percentage of operating costs covered by the state steadily declining over the years and asking students to cover more of the costs by increasing tuition. In a time when the state is in a budget surplus, we should be investing our state's human capital. Furthermore, we should not be putting this strain further on the students and faculty to make up the difference when our state chooses to not support our public colleges and universities which open doors and minds for the people of Connecticut.